



Director's Speaker Series

Robert Davis
Ohio State

**"State Responses to the Collapse of Civil
Order: an Italian Example"**

Thursday, December 4, 2003
12:00 p.m. *
Mershon Center
Room 120

After 1560, the Papal States in central Italy were engulfed in an upsurge of urban and rural violence tied to a sharp increase in clan warfare, lethal new weaponry, and general rebellion against centralizing authority. By the late 1570s, the rule of law had largely disappeared from much of the Papal territories. This paper examines the (often unsuccessful) responses attempted by a succession of popes, applied with increasing ferocity against their subjects. In the process, it also explores the contrasting nature of state and private violence, both in a pre-modern and a present-day context, and traces the roots of some of the more extreme methods of repression that we tend to associate with the twentieth rather than the sixteenth century.



A specialist in early modern European History, Professor Davis was a visiting fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, 1991-92. His research, focused primarily on working-class social dynamics in Republican Venice, 1450- 1700, has resulted in the publication of two books on Venetian social history: *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal* (winner of the 1991 Marraro Prize for Italian Historical Studies) and *The War of the Fists* (1994).

He is currently studying worker rites of passage in early-modern northern Italy.

*R.S.V.P. to [Viki Jones](#) if you plan to attend this event.